

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05

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C - MR. SONNENFELDT

EUR - MR. LAINGEN

NEA/P - MR. VAN ORDER

EUR/IB - MR. ROWELL

S/S - WHLUERS

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P R 122331Z MAR 75 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY

USDEL ASWAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS STATE 055943

TOSEC 398

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PFOR, PO

SUBJECT:PORTUGUESE COUP ATTEMPT - PRESS GUIDANCE

ATHENS/BRUSSELS PLEASE PASS TO HARTMAN

FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR USE BY DEPARTMENT

SPOKESMAN MARCH 12 NOON BRIEFING AND SHOULD BE DRAWN ON

AS APPROPRIATE IN RESPONDING TO OFFICIAL OR MEDIA INQUIRIES:

Q: IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE COUP ATTEMPT HOW DOES THE U.S.

VIEW THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL?

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A: FIRST, LET ME STRESS AGAIN IN VERY STRONG AND UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS THAT THE UNITED STATES -- AND THAT INCLUDES AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI -- HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INVOLVEMENT IN THE APPARENT COUP ATTEMPT IN PORTUGAL YESTERDAY. ANY SUGGESTIONS TO THE CONTRARY ARE QUITE MALICIOUS AND CONTRARY TO THE FACTS.

SECOND, I WOULD NOT WANT TO SPECULATE ON WHAT IS AN INTERNAL AND VERY COMPLEX PROBLEM. THE UNITED STATES HAS STRONGLY WELCOMED THE PROSPECTS OF FREE ELECTIONS IN PORTUGAL AND THE EVOLUTION OF INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

REFLECTING THE FREELY EXPRESSED WILL OF THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE. WE WOULD NATURALLY REGRET ANY DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD IN ANY WAY INTERRUPT THIS HOPEFUL TREND.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON BRIGADIER GENERAL OTELO DE CARVALHO'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS IN LISBON YESTERDAY THAT HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI'S SAFETY?

A: AS TO THE SAFETY OF AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI, IT IS A PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY GOVERNMENT THAT MAINTAINS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ANOTHER TO ASSURE THE SAFETY OF DIPLOMATS ACCREDITED TO IT. WE, THEREFORE, EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL TO TAKE EVERY STEP NECESSARY TO INSURE THAT NOTHING AFFECTS THE SAFETY OF AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI, OTHER EMBASSY PERSONNEL OR THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF THE EMBASSY PROPER. THIS WAS CONVEYED TO THE PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR, JOAO HALL THEMIDO, WHO WAS CALLED IN LAST NIGHT BY ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS JAMES LOWENSTEIN. IT WAS ALSO MADE CLEAR IN CONTACTS IN LISBON BETWEEN AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI AND PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

THE EMBASSY REPORTS THAT THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING THE NECESSARY PROTECTION. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE ORAL ASSURANCES RECEIVED LAST NIGHT BY OUR LISBON EMBASSY FROM THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTRY. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY STATED THAT THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTENDS TO GUARANTEE UNCLASSIFIED

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THE SAFETY OF THE AMBASSADOR AND THE EMBASSY.

Q: HAS A FORMAL REQUEST BEEN MADE BY THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI RECALLED?

A: NO.

Q: IS ANY THOUGHT BEING GIVEN HERE TO HIS RECALL?

A: NO. AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI HAS THE FULL CONFIDENCE OF BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON BRIGADIER GENERAL OTELO DE CARVALHO'S STATEMENT ALLEGING AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI HAS HAD "SIMILAR TROUBLE" IN PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENTS?

A: ANY SUCH ALLEGATIONS ABOUT AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI'S PAST ARE COMPLETELY WITHOUT FOUNDATION AND ANY SUCH SPECULATION CAN ONLY BE REGARDED AS MISCHIEVOUS. I DON'T INTEND TO

PURSUE THIS MATTER ANY FURTHER.

Q: ARE THINGS NOW QUIET IN LISBON AND AROUND THE EMBASSY?

A: YES.

Q: WHAT KIND OF PROTECTION IS BEING PROVIDED THE EMBASSY?

A: IT IS BEING ADEQUATELY GUARDED BY BOTH SOLDIERS AND POLICE.

Q: ARE YOU ADVISING AMERICAN TRAVELLERS TO STAY AWAY FROM PORTUGAL?

A: NO. WE DO URGE THAT THEY TAKE REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS AVOIDING DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE LIKE.

Q: IS THE AIRPORT NOW OPEN?

A: WE UNDERSTAND THAT IS THE CASE.

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Q: WHERE DO WE STAND ON THE MATTER OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL?

A: WE ANNOUNCED ON DECEMBER 3, 1974 A PROGRAM, TO BEGIN AT ONCE, OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION.

ON JANUARY 24 FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION OF HIS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES, AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI PLEDGED U.S. COOPERATION IN VARIOUS AREAS AS A RESULT OF TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS.

THE SPECIFIC AMOUNTS FOR EACH OF THE PROGRAMS HAVE NOT YET BEEN TALLIED BUT THEY WILL BE FINANCED FROM

THE \$25 MILLION AUTHORIZED BUT NOT YET APPROPRIATED BY
THE CONGRESS.

Q: THERE WILL BE NO CUTTING OFF OR CUTTING BACK OF
THIS PROGRAM IN VIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS?

A: NO.

Q: WHERE DO MATTERS STAND ON THE AZORES BASE
NEGOTIATIONS?

A: PERIODIC MEETINGS BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY AND
PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR THEMIDO HAVE TAKEN PLACE --
THE LAST BEING IN JANUARY.

Q: DO YOU EXPECT THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO CONTINUE?

A: YES.

Q: CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU ASSESS PORTUGAL'S
RELATIONSHIP TO NATO IN VIEW OF THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS?

A: I CAN ONLY SAY THAT PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES ON HIS
VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST OCTOBER 18 PUBLICLY REAFFIRMED
PORTUGAL'S COMMITMENT TO NATO. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF
ANY CHANGE IN THAT SITUATION. INGERSOLL
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